

Council on Postsecondary Education
February 8, 2013

Revisions to *Stronger by Degrees: A Strategic Agenda for Kentucky Postsecondary and Adult Education, 2011–15*

ACTION: Staff recommends that the Council approve the attached revisions to the strategies and performance metrics in the 2011–15 strategic agenda originally approved by the Council on February 3, 2011.

January 2013 marks the midpoint of *Stronger by Degrees*, the Council's strategic agenda, which focuses on college readiness; student success; research, economic, and community development; and efficiency and innovation. Staff proposes several limited adjustments to the text of the strategic agenda and to the performance metrics used to measure the implementation of the plan.

Changes to the text of the strategic agenda are minimal, consisting of edits to three of the 32 strategies initially identified to achieve the nine policy objectives in the plan. These changes are detailed in Attachment A.

Performance metrics that have been shown to be problematic during the first two years of the agenda are listed in Attachment B, along with a proposed revision or replacement. 2015 targets for these revised metrics at the state and institutional levels will be established in the coming months. The revised metrics will be reported for the first time in the 2012-13 Accountability Report, to be released in early 2014.

Attachment A: Revisions to the Strategies for Implementation

College Readiness

Policy Objective 2: Increase the number of college-ready GED graduates.

Strategy 2.1. Transform the delivery of adult education services to lead to higher student engagement levels. Increase enrollment in Kentucky Adult Education programs and services.

Rationale: Broadens the strategy from a simple statement about enrollment to include expanded targeted outreach and partnership development; administrative and instructional leadership development; implementation of a research-based, managed program design; and greater use and integration of instructional technology.

Student Success

No changes

Research, Economic, and Community Development

Policy Objective 6: Increase basic, applied, and translational research to create new knowledge and economic growth.

Strategy 6.3. Develop and implement a strategic communications plan that highlights Develop and implement strategic communications with and between the institutions and public audiences that highlight campus-based research and development initiatives and the impact of this work on Kentucky's economic and community competitiveness.

Rationale: Clarifies that strengthened communication between institutions is part of the strategy, not just communication to external audiences.

Policy Objective 7: Increase educational attainment and quality of life in Kentucky communities through regional stewardship, public service, and community outreach.

Strategy 7.3. Maximize the impact of Enhance postsecondary education's contribution to improving the health of Kentucky's people.

Rationale: Describes more modest strategic efforts better suited to CPE's indirect role in this area.

Efficiency and Innovation

No changes

Attachment B: Revisions to the Performance Metrics

College Readiness

Policy Objective 3. Increase the effectiveness of Kentucky's K-12 teachers and school leaders.

Existing Metric: New teacher excellence (top 15% nationally) — percent of teaching program graduates scoring in the top 15 percent nationally on Praxis II (pedagogy) licensure exams.

Revised Metric: New teacher excellence (top 25% nationally) — percent of teaching program graduates scoring in the top 25 percent nationally on Praxis II (pedagogy and content area) licensure exams.

Rationale: The revised metric mirrors the one adopted by the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) after the development of CPE's strategic agenda. The revised metric still captures the idea of new teacher excellence while widening the scope through the inclusion of content area assessments. While a metric based on gains in student performance is preferable, none is currently available.

Student Success

Policy Objective 4. Increase high quality degree production and completion rates at all levels and close achievement gaps, particularly for lower-income, underprepared, and underrepresented minority students.

Existing Metric: Graduation rate gaps of low-income, underprepared, and underrepresented minority students — gap between the graduation rates of students in the target group compared to students who are not in the target group, using the IPEDS graduation rate metric at 150% of minimum time to degree.

Revised Metric: Graduation rates of low-income, underprepared, and underrepresented minority students — graduation rate of students in the target group, using the IPEDS graduation rate metric at 150% of minimum time to degree.

Rationale: Change from "gap" to "rate" is recommended because targets expressed as a gap are not "anchored" to graduation rate targets for each group, making them more difficult to explain and visualize than simple graduation rates. There will be no changes to the composition of the target groups.

Policy Objective 5: Decrease financial barriers to college access and completion.

Existing Metric: Net direct cost for low-income students — the cost of tuition, fees and books after all grants and scholarships were received by full-time, low-income, Kentucky resident students. Negative amounts reflect grant and scholarship money available to pay indirect costs such as room and board.

Revised Metric: Grants to low-income students in excess of direct cost — average grant and scholarship aid received by full-time, in-state Pell grant recipients in excess of the cost of tuition, mandatory fees and books. Amounts reflect grant money available to pay indirect costs such as room and board. Loans are not included in grant calculations.

Rationale: The new metric is essentially the same number, displayed as a positive rather than a negative amount. This change simplifies the explanation and reporting of this metric.

Research, Economic, and Community Development

No changes

Efficiency and Innovation

Policy Objective 8. Increase academic productivity through program innovations.

Existing Metric: Credits attempted by degree graduates — average credit hours attempted by bachelor's degree graduates at four-year institutions and by associate degree graduates at KCTCS.

Revised Metric: Credits earned by degree graduates — average credit hours earned at the degree-granting institution by bachelor's degree graduates at four-year institutions and by associate degree graduates at KCTCS.

Rationale: Credits earned is a better measure of credit-to-degree than credits attempted, as attempted credit includes courses from which students have withdrawn. The existing metric was the only version available two years ago; it provided a comparison to other states and institutions through the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). The revised metric was introduced subsequently by the national Complete College America (CCA) initiative; it also provides a comparison to other states and institutions.